

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 4183

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TAGS: CI, PGOV

SUBJ: GOVERNMENT DECENTRALIZATION STATUTE ISSUED

1. SUMMARY. LONG-ANTICIPATED DECREE LAW ON GOVERNMENT DECENTRALIZATION PUBLISHED JULY 12. STATUE ENVISIONS GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEM COMPOSED OF REGIONS, PROVINCES, MUNICIPALITIES, AND SPECIAL METROPOLITAN AREAS, ALL UNDER SUPERVISION OF CENTRAL GOVT EXECUTIVE BRANCH. EMPHASIS IN STATUTE IS ON DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND COORDINATION OF GOVT SDIVICES. NO PROVISION IS MADE FOR ELECTIONS OF ANY KIND OR FOR POLITICAL PARTY ACTIVITIES. LOCAL "DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS" PROVIDE READY-MADE VEHICLE FOR EXPANION OF GREMIALISTA INFLUENCE, HOWEVER. SYSTEM WILL BE ESTABLISHED GRADUALLY; FINAL GOAL IS TWELVE REGIONS AND SANTIAGO METROPOLITAN AREA, WITH FIRST FIVE REGIONS TO BE CREATED AUGUST 1, 1974. END SUMMARY.

2. DECREE LAW 573 DATED JULY 8, 1974 AND PUBLISHED IN DIARIO OFICIAL JULY 12 IS ENTITLED "STATUTE OF GOVERNMENT AND INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE" AND PROVIDES GENERAL RULES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE DECENTRALIZATION. INTRODUCTORY CLAUSES STRESS NEED FOR (1) BETTER USE OF CHILE'S NATURAL RESOURCES, (2) EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS IN DETERMINING THEIR OWN FUTURE, (3) EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY OF ALL CITIZENS TO PARTICIPATE IN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS, (4) DECENTRALIZED DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, AND (5) PLANNING AND COORDINATION OF GOVT ACTIVITIES AT LOCAL

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LEVEL.

3. NEW STRUCTURE WILL CONSIST OF REGIONS, PROVINCES, MUNICIPALITIES, AND METROPOLITAN AREAS. EACH REGION WILL CONSTITUTE "A CAREFULLY ORGANIZED TERRITORIAL UNIT -- WITH EFFECTIVE COORDINATION OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SERVICES --- AND TRUE PARTICIPATION BY THE CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS OF THE PEOPLE." REGION IS TO BE HEADED BY A REGIONAL INTENDENTE (INTENDENTE REGIONAL) APPOINTED BY CHIEF OF STATE. EACH REGION WILL HAVE A "REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL" IN WHICH PRINCIPAL GOVT AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS WILL BE REPRESENTED. A "REGIONAL PLANNING AND COORDINATION SECRETARIAT" WILL ADVISE INTEODENTE REGIONAL AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL.

4. EACH PROVINCE WILL BE HEADED BY A "PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR" (GOBERNADOR PROVINCIAL) APPOINTED BY CHIEF OF STATE WHO "WILL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT" OPINION OF REGIONAL INTENDENTE. GOVERNOR WILL BE PRINCIPALLY AN ACTION OFFICER CARRYING OUT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

5. MUNICIPALITY IS HEADED BY A MAYOR (ALCALDE) APPOINTED BY CHIEF OF STATE "TAKING INTO ACCOUNT" OPINION OF REGIONAL INTENDENTE. MAYOR WILL BE ASSISTED BY A LOCAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL AND A LOCAL PLANNING AND COORDINATION OFFICE.

6. STATUTE AUTHORIZES CREATION OF "METROPOLITAN AREAS" WITH SPECIAL GOVERNMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS AND ENJOINED TO USE "INTEGRATED PLANNING" FOR THE AREA.

7. EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE GENERAL SUPERVISION OVER ALL FOUR UNITS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

8. TRANSITORY ARTICLE PROVIDES THAT ABOVE SYSTEM MAY BE IMPLEMENTED GRADUALLY AND THAT PRESENT ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS REMAIN IN EFFECT UNTIL NEW SYSTEM REPLACES THEM. STATUTE ENVISIONS SERIES OF SUBSEQUENT IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS ON SUCH TOPICS AS WHICH OF PRESENT PROVINCES WILL BE COMBINED INTO WHICH REGION AND WHERE NEW STRUCTURE WILL FIRST GO INTO EFFECT.

9. DECREE LAW 575 DATED JULY 10 AND PUBLISHED IN DIARIO OFICIAL
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JULY 13 CONTAINED IMPLEMENTING REGULATIONS FOR MANY OF STATUTE'S PROVISIONS. THIS DECREE LAW ESTABLISHED TWELVE REGIONS AND A SANTIAGO METROPOLITAN AREA, DEFINES IN DETAIL FUNCTIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY AUTHORIZED BY STATUTE, AND PROVIDES THAT REGIONALIZATION PROGRAM WILL BEGIN AUGUST 1, 1974 WITH FIVE REGIONS--TWO IN EXTREME NORTH, TWO IN EXTREME SOUTH, AND ONE IN CONCEPCION AREA OF SOUTH-CENTRAL CHILE. DURING JULY 11 CABINET INSTALLATION CEREMONY, GEN PINOCHET STRESSED IMPORTANCE

OF REGIONALIZATION PROGRAM. FOLLOWING DAY ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM COMMISSION (CONARA) CHIEF GEN JULIO CANESSA HELD HIGHLY PUBLICIZED PRESS CONFERENCE TO EXPLAIN PROVISIONS OF BOTH DECREE LAWS.

10. COMMENT. IDEA OF REALLY DOING SOMETHING ABOUT DECENTRALIZING ADMINISTRATIVE POWER, HONORED IN PAST MORE BY LIP SERVICE THAN CONCRETE ACTION, ASSUMED IMPORTANCE FAIRLY SHORTLY AFTER SEPTEMBER COUP (SANTIAGO A-251, DEC 12, 1973). PRESENT STATUE, SPONSORED BY CONARA, IS RESPONSIVE TO SOME EXTENT TO DESIRES SIMILAR TO THOSE WHICH IN US LED TO EFFECT TO ESTABLISH "REGIONAL CAPITALS" TO COORDINATE GOVT SERVICES AND MAKE THEM MORE RESPONSIVE TO LOCAL NEEDS. WHETHER THIS LAUDABLE GOAL WILL ACTUALLY BE ACHIEVED REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

11. REGIONAL AND LOCAL "DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS" PROVIDE VEHICLE FOR ORGANIZED INTEREST GROUPS, PARTICULARLY THE GREMIOS (TRADE AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS) TO MAKE THEIR INFLUENCE FELT. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, GREMIOS ARE AMONG MOST VOCAL ADVOCATES OF "DECENTRALIZATION." NO PROVISION IS MADE FOR POLITICAL PARTY ACTIVITIES OR FOR ELECTIONS OF OFFICIALS OR REPRESENTATIVES AT ANY LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING MUNICIPAL MAYORS WHO HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN ELECTED PRIOR TO PRESENT MILITARY GOVT. THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH GENERAL POLITICAL PRACTICE UNDER JUNTA, AND EMPHASIZES ITS DETERMINATION TO AVOID ALL SEMBLANCE OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY BY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OR PARTY ORGANIZATIONS IN CHILE AT THIS STAGE.
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